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AN

UNFORTUNATE MOTHER'S

A D V I C E

TO HER

ABSENT DAUGHTERS.



Pennington (Sarah)
AN Lady

UNFORTUNATE MOTHER'S

A D V I C E

TO HER

ABSENT DAUGHTERS,

IN A

L E T T E R

TO

Miss PENNINGTON.

THE SIXTH EDITION.

L O N D O N:

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FOR J. WALTER,

AT HOMER'S HEAD, CHARING-CROSS.

M.DCC.LXXIII.



AN
UNFORTUNATE MOTHER'S
ADVICE, &c.

My dear J E N N Y.

WAS there any probability that
a letter from me would be
permitted to reach *your hand alone*, I
should not have chosen this least eligible
method of writing to you.—The public
is no way concerned in family affairs,
and ought not to be made a party in
A them ;

them ;—but my circumstances are such as lay me under a necessity of either communicating my sentiments to the world, or of concealing them *from you* ;—the latter would, I think, be the breach of an indispensable duty, which obliges me to wave the impropriety of the former.

A long train of events, of a most extraordinary nature, conspired to remove you, very early, from the tender care of an affectionate mother;—you were then too young to be able to form any right judgment of her conduct, and since that time it is very probable that it has been represented to you in the most unfavourable light.—The general pre-
5 judice

judice against me I never gave myself the useless trouble of any endeavour to remove.—I do not mean to infer from hence that the opinion of others is of no material consequence—on the contrary, I would advise you always to remember, that, next to the consciousness of acting right, the public voice should be regarded, and to endeavour by a prudent behaviour—even in the most trifling instances—to secure it in your favour ;—the being educated in a different opinion was a misfortune *to me*.—I was indeed early and wisely taught, that virtue was the one thing necessary, and without it no happiness could be expected either in this, or in any future state of existence ;—but, with this good principle, a mistaken one

was at the same time inculcated, namely, that the self-approbation, arising from conscious virtue, was alone sufficient—and that the censures of an ill-natured world, ever ready to calumniate, when not founded on truth, were beneath the concern of a person, whose actions were guided by the superior motive of obedience to the will of Heaven:—This notion, strongly imbibed before reason had gained sufficient strength to discover it's fallacy, was the cause of an inconsiderate conduct in my subsequent life, which mark'd my character with a disadvantageous impression.—To you I shall speak with the most unreserv'd sincerity, not concealing a fault which you may profit by the knowledge of—and
therefore

therefore I freely own, that in my younger years, satisfied with keeping strictly within the bounds of virtue, I took a foolish pleasure in exceeding those of prudence, and was ridiculously vain of indulging a latitude of behaviour, into which others of my age were afraid of launching;—but then, in justice to myself, I must at the same time declare, that this freedom was only taken in public company—and, so extremely cautious was I of doing any thing that appear'd to me a just ground for censure, I call Heaven to witness, your father was the first man whom I ever made any private assignation with, or even met in a room alone—nor did I take that liberty with him, untill the most solemn mutual engagement,

gagement, the matrimonial ceremony, had bound us to each other.—My behaviour then, he has frequently since acknowledged, fully convinced him I was not only innocent of any criminal act but of every vicious thought—and that the outward freedom of my deportment proceeded merely from a great gaiety of temper, and, from a very high flow of spirits, never broke—if the expression may be allow'd—into the formal rules of decorum.—To sum up the whole in a few words, my private conduct was what the severest prude could not condemn, my public such as the most finish'd coquet alone would have ventur'd upon ;—the latter only could be known to the world, and, consequently, from
thence

thence must their opinion be taken. You will therefore easily be sensible, that it would not be favourable to me—on the contrary, it gave a general prejudice against me—and this has been since made use of as an argument to gain credit to the malicious falsehoods laid to my charge:—For this reason—convinc'd by long experience that the greater part of mankind are so apt to receive, and so willing to retain a bad impression of others, that, when it is once establish'd, there is hardly a possibility of removing it through life—I have, for some years past, silently acquiesc'd in the dispensations of Providence, without attempting any justification of myself;—and, being conscious that the infamous aspersions cast on
my

my character were not founded on truth, I have sat down content with the certainty of an open and perfect acquittal of all vicious dispositions, or criminal conduct, at that great day, when all things shall appear as they really are, and when both our actions, and the most secret motives for them, will be made manifest to men and angels.

Had your Father been amongst the number of those who were deceiv'd by appearances, I should have thought it my duty to leave no method unessay'd to clear myself in his opinion—but that was not the case:—He knows that many of those appearances, which have been urged against me, I was forc'd to submit
to,

to, not only from his direction, but by his absolute command—which, contrary to reason and to my own interest, I was, for more than twelve years, weak enough implicitly to obey—and that others, even since our separation, were occasioned by some particular instances of his behaviour, which rendered it impossible for me to act with safety in any other manner:—to *him* I appeal for the truth of this assertion, who is conscious of the meaning, which may hereafter be explained to you.—Perfectly acquainted with my principles and with my natural disposition, his heart, I am convinc'd, never here condemn'd me.—Being greatly incens'd that my father's Will gave to me an independent fortune—which

Will

Will he imagin'd I was accessory to;
 or at least that I could have prevented
 —he was thereby laid open to the arts
 of designing men, who, having their
 own interest solely in view, worked him
 up into a desire of revenge—and from
 thence, upon probable circumstances,
 into a public accusation :—though that
 public accusation was supported only by
 the single testimony of a person, whose
 known falshood had made him a thou-
 sand times declare that he would not
 credit her oath in the most trifling inci-
 dent ;—yet—when he was disappointed
 of the additional evidence he might have
 been flatter'd with the hope of obtaining
 —it was too late to recede.——This I
 sincerely believe to be the truth of the
 case,

case, tho' I too well know his *tenacious* temper, to expect a present justification;—but, whenever he shall arrive on the verge of eternity—if reason holds her place at that awful moment, and if religion has then any power on his heart—I make no doubt, he will at that time acquit me to his children, and with truth he must then confess that no part of my behaviour to him ever deserv'd the treatment I have met with.—Sorry am I to be under the necessity of pointing out faults in the conduct of another, which are, perhaps, long since repented of, and ought in that case to be as much forgotten as they are most truly forgiven:—Heaven knows, that, so far from retaining any degree of resentment in my heart, the
 person

person breathes not whom I wish to hurt,
 or to whom I would not this moment
 render every service in my power.—The
 injuries which I have sustain'd, had I no
 children, should contentedly be buried in
 silence, until the great day of retribution;
 —but, in justice to you, to them, and to
 myself, it is incumbent on me, as far as
 possible, to efface the false impressions,
 which, by such silence, might be fixed
 on your mind, and on those of your bro-
 thers and sisters, whom I include with
 you.—To this end, it will be necessary
 to enter into a circumstantial history of
 near fifteen years, full of incidents of
 a nature so uncommon as to be scarcely
 credible.—This, I am convinc'd, will
 effectually clear me, in your opinions,
 of

of the imputations I now lie under, and it will prove, almost to a demonstration, the true cause of those proceedings against me that were couched under pretended motives—as injurious to my reputation as they were false in themselves.—But this must be deferr'd, some time longer—you are all yet too young to enter into things of this kind, or to judge properly of them.—When a few years shall, by ripening your understandings, remove this objection, you shall be informed of the whole truth, most impartially and without disguise —'till then, suspend your belief of all that may have reached your ears with regard to me, and wait the knowledge

B

of

of those facts, which *my future letter* will reveal for your information.

Thus much, I thought it necessary to premise concerning myself, tho' foreign to the design of *this epistle*, which is only to remind you that you have still an affectionate mother, who is anxious for your welfare and desirous of giving you some advice with regard to your conduct in life.—I would lay down a few precepts for you, which, if attended to, will supply—as far as it is in my power to supply—the deprivation of a constant and tender maternal care.—The address is *to you* in particular, your sisters being yet too young to receive it,
but

but my intention is for the equal service of you all.

You are just entering, my dear girl, into a world full of deceit and falshood, where few persons or things appear in their true character.—Vice hides her deformity with the borrow'd garb of virtue—and, though discernible to an intelligent and careful observer, by the unbecoming awkwardness of her deportment under it, she passes on thousands undetected:—Every present pleasure usurps the name of happiness, and as such deceives the unwary pursuer:—thus one general mask disguises the whole face of things, and it requires a long experience, and a penetrating judgment, to

discover the truth——Thrice happy they, whose docile tempers improve from the instructions of maturer age, and who thereby attain some degree of this necessary knowledge, while it may be useful in directing their conduct!

The turn, which your mind may now take, will fix the happiness or misery of your future life—and, I am too nearly concern'd for your welfare, not to be most anxiously solicitous that you may be early led into so just a way of thinking as will be productive to you of a prudent, rational behaviour, and which will secure to you a lasting felicity.—You were old enough, before our separation, to convince me that Heaven had not denied you

you a good natural understanding.—
 This, if properly cultivated, will set
 you above that trifling disposition, too
 common among the female world, which
 makes youth ridiculous, maturity insignificant,
 and old age contemptible.—It
 is therefore needless to enlarge on that
 head, since good sense is there the best
 adviser—and, without it, all admonitions
 or directions on the subject would be
 as fruitless as to lay down rules for the
 conduct or for the actions of an idiot.

There is no room to doubt but that
 sufficient care will be taken to give you
 a polite education—yet, a religious one
 is of still greater consequence:—necessary
 as the former is for your making a

proper figure in the world, and for your being well accepted in it, the latter is yet more so to secure to you the approbation of the greatest and best of Beings, on whose favor depends your everlasting happiness:—Let therefore your duty to GOD be ever the first and principal object of your care;—as your Creator and Governor, he claims adoration and obedience—as your father and friend, he demands submissive duty and affection. —Remember that, from this common Parent of the universe, you receiv'd your life—that, to His general providence, you owe the continuance of it—and to His bounty you are indebted for all the health, ease, advantages, or enjoyments, which help to make that life agreeable.

agreeable.—A sense of benefits received naturally inspires a grateful disposition, with a desire of making suitable returns—all that can here be made, for innumerable favors every moment bestowed, is a thankful acknowledgment and a willing obedience;—in these be never wanting:—Make it an invariable rule to begin and to end the day with a solemn address to the Deity—I mean not by this, what is commonly, with too much propriety, called *saying of prayers*, namely, a customary repetition of a few good words, without either devotion or attention—than which nothing is more inexcusable and affrontive to the Deity—it is the homage of the heart that can alone be accepted by him.—Expressions

of our absolute dependance on, and of our entire resignation to him—thanksgivings for the mercies already received—petitions for those blessings it is fit for us to pray for—and intercessions for all our fellow creatures compose the principal parts of this duty;—which may be comprized in very few words, or may be more enlarged upon, as the circumstances of time and disposition may render most suitable—for it is not the length, but the sincerity and attention of our prayers, that will make them efficacious:—A good heart, joined to a tolerable understanding, will seldom be at a loss for proper words, with which to clothe these sentiments—and all persons, being best acquainted with their own particular

particular circumstances, may reasonably be supposed best qualified for adapting their petitions and acknowledgments to them ;—but for those, who are of a different opinion, there are many excellent forms of prayer already composed—amongst these, none, that I know of, are equal to Doctor Hoadly's—the late Bishop of Winchester—which I recommend to your perusal and use:—in the preface to them, you will find better instructions on this head than I am capable of giving, and to these I refer you.

It is acknowledg'd that our petitions cannot in any degree alter the intention of a Being, who is in himself invariable, and without a possibility of change ;
—all

—all that can be expected from them is, that, by bettering ourselves, they will render us more proper objects of His favorable regard:—and this must necessarily be the result of a serious, regular, and constant discharge of this branch of our duty;—for it is scarcely possible to offer up our sincere and fervent devotions to Heaven, every morning and evening, without leaving on our minds such useful impressions as will naturally dispose us to a ready and chearful obedience and will inspire a filial fear of offending—the best security virtue can have.—As you value your own happiness, let not the force of bad examples ever lead you into an habitual disuse of secret prayer—nor let an unpardonable negligence

negligence so far prevail on you as to make you rest satisfied with a formal, customary, inattentive repetition of some well chosen words—let your heart and attention always go with your lips, and, experience will soon convince you, that this permission of addressing the supreme Being is the most valuable prerogative of human nature—the chief, nay, the only support under all the distresses and calamities to which this state of sin and misery is liable—the highest rational satisfaction the mind is capable of, on this side the grave—and the best preparative for everlasting happiness beyond it—This is a duty ever in your own power, and therefore you only will be culpable by the omission of it:—Public
 worship

worship may not always be so, but, whenever it is, do not wilfully neglect the service of the church, at least on Sundays—and let your behaviour there be adapted to the solemnity of the place, and to the intention of the meeting—

Regard neither the actions, nor the dress of others—let not your eyes rove in search of acquaintance, but in the time of divine service avoid, as much as possible, all complimentary civilities, of which there is too great an intercourse, in most of our churches;—remember that your only business there is to pay a solemn act of devotion to Almighty God—and let every part of your conduct be suitable to this great end.—If you hear a good sermon, treasure it in your memory, that

you

you may reap all the benefit it was capable of imparting ;——if you should hear an indifferent one, some good things must be in it—retain those, and let the remainder be buried in oblivion—ridicule not the preacher, who no doubt has done his best, and who is rather the object of pity than of contempt for having been plac'd in a situation of life, to which his talents were not equal—he may perhaps be a good man, tho' he is not a great orator.——I would also recommend to you the early and frequent participation of the communion——or, what is commonly called, *receiving the sacrament*—as the indispensable duty of every christian :——there is no institution of our religion more simple, plain and intelligible

gible than this as deliver'd to us by our Saviour—and, most of the elaborate treatises written on the subject have served only to puzzle and to disturb weak minds, by throwing the dark veil of superstition and of human invention over a plain positive command—given by him in so explicit a manner as to be easily comprehended by the meanest capacity, and which is doubtless in the power of all his sincere followers to pay an acceptable obedience to.—Nothing has more contributed to the neglect of this duty than the numerous well-meaning books that have been written to enjoin *a month's*, or *a week's preparation* as previously necessary to the due performance of it — by which

means

means filling the minds of many with needless terror—putting it even out of the power of some to receive it at all—and, inducing great numbers to rest satisfied with doing it only once or twice in a year, on some high festival;—whereas it was certainly the constant custom of the apostles and primitive christians, on every Sunday—and it ought to be received by us, as often as it is administer'd in the church we frequent—which in most places is but once in a month;—nor do I think it excusable, at any time, to turn our backs upon the table we see prepar'd for that purpose, on pretence of not being fit to partake worthily of it:—The best, the only true preparation for this, and for every other
part

part of religious duty, is a good and virtuous life, by which the mind is constantly kept in such a devotional frame, as to require but a little recollection to be suited to any particular act of worship or of obedience, that may occasionally offer;—and, without a good and virtuous life, there cannot be a greater, or more fatal mistake than to suppose, that a few days, or weeks spent in humiliation and prayer will render us at all the more acceptable to the Deity, or that we should be thereby better fitted for any one instance of that duty, which, we must universally pay, to be either approved by him, or to be advantageous to ourselves:—I would not therefore advise you to read any of those

weekly

weekly preparatives, which are too apt to lead the mind into error, by teaching it to rest in a mere shadow of piety, wherein there is nothing rationally satisfactory.—The best books, which I have ever met with on the subject, are Bishop HOADLY's *Plain Account of the Nature and End of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper*, and NELSON's *Great Duty of frequenting the Christian Sacrifice*.—To the former are annexed the prayers which I before mention'd—these are well worth your attentive perusal—the design of the institution is therein fully explain'd, agreeable both to scripture and to reason—stript of that veil of mystery, which has been industriously thrown over it by designing or by mistaken men:—

C

and

and it is there laid as plainly open to every capacity as it was at first left us by our great Master—Read *these books* with due attention:—you will there find every necessary instruction concerning the rite, and every reasonable inducement to the constant and to the conscientious performance of it.

The sincere practice of religious duties naturally leads to the proper discharge of the social, which may be all comprehended in that one great general rule of *doing unto others as you would they should do unto you*—but, of these, more particularly hereafter.—I shall first give you my advice concerning *Employment*—it being of great moment to set out in life
in

in such a method as may be useful to yourself and beneficial to others.

Time is valuable, it's loss is irretrievable!—the remembrance of having made an ill use of it must be one of the sharpest tortures to those who are on the brink of eternity!—and, what can yield a more unpleasing retrospect, than whole years idled away in an irrational insignificant manner—Examples of which are continually before our eyes!—Look on every day as a blank sheet of paper put into your hands to be fill'd up;—remember the characters will remain to endless ages, and that they never can be expunged;—be careful therefore not to write any thing but what you may read

with pleasure, a thousand years after:—I would not be understood in a sense so strict as might debar you from any innocent amusement, suitable to your age, and agreeable to your inclination:—diversions, properly regulated, are not only allowable, they are absolutely necessary to youth—and are never criminal but when taken to excess—that is, when they engross the whole thought, when they are made the chief business of life—they then give a distaste to every valuable employment—and, by a sort of infatuation, leave the mind in a state of restless impatience from the conclusion of one until the commencement of another;—This is the unfortunate disposition of many:—guard most carefully against it,
for

for nothing can be attended with more pernicious consequences.—A little observation will convince you, that there is not, amongst the human species, a set of more miserable beings than those who cannot live out of a constant succession of diversions ;—these people have no comprehension of the more satisfactory pleasure to be found in retirement ;—thought is insupportable, and consequently solitude must be intolerable to them :—they are a burthen to themselves, and are a pest to their acquaintance, by vainly seeking for happiness in company, where they are seldom acceptable—I say vainly, for true happiness exists only in the mind, nothing foreign can give it :—The utmost to be attained,

by what is called a gay life, is a short forgetfulness of misery to be felt with accumulated anguish in every interval of reflection.—This restless temper is frequently the product of a too eager pursuit of pleasure, in the early part of life, to the neglect of those valuable improvements which would lay the foundation of a more solid and permanent felicity.—Youth is the season for diversions, but it is also the season for acquiring knowledge, for fixing useful habits, and for laying in a stock of such well chosen materials, as may grow into a serene happiness, which will encrease with every added year of life, and will bloom in the fullest perfection at the decline of it.—The great art of education consists in assigning

assigning to each it's proper place, in such a manner that the one shall never become irksome by intrenching on the other. — Our separation having taken from me the pleasing task of endeavouring, to the best of my ability, to suit them occasionally, as might be most conducive both to your profit and pleasure, it only remains for me to give you general rules, which indeed, accidents may make it necessary sometimes to vary;—those however must be left to your own discretion, and, I am convinc'd, that you have a sufficient share of understanding to be very capable of making advantageously such casual regulations to yourself, if the inclination is not wanting.

It is an excellent method to appropriate the morning wholly to improvement; —the afternoon may then be allow'd to diversions:—under the last head, I place company, books of the amusing kind, and entertaining productions of the needle, as well as plays, balls, cards, &c. which more commonly go by the name of diversions:—the afternoon, and evening till supper, may by these be employed with innocence and propriety; — but let not one of them ever be suffer'd to intrude on the former part of the day, which should be always devoted to more useful employments.—One half hour, or more, either before or immediately after breakfast, I would have you constantly give to the attentive perusal of some rationally
pious

pious author, or to some part of the New Testament, with which, and indeed with the whole scripture, you ought to make yourself perfectly acquainted, as the basis on which your religion is founded—From this practice, you will reap more real benefit than can be suppos'd by those who have never made the experiment.—The other hours may be divided amongst those necessary and polite acquisitions which are suitable to your sex, age, and to your rank in life.—Study *your own language* thoroughly, that you may speak correctly and write grammatically:—do not content yourself with the common use of words, which custom has taught you from the cradle, but learn from whence they are derived, and what are
their

their proper significations.—*French* you ought to be as well acquainted with as with *English*:—and *Italian* might, without much difficulty, be added.—Acquire a good knowledge of history—that of your own country first, then of the other European nations—read them not with a view to amuse but to improve your mind — and to that end make reflections on what you have read, which may be useful to yourself, and will render your conversation agreeable to others:—Learn so much of *Geography*, as to form a just idea of the situation of places, mentioned in any author — and this will make history more entertaining to you.

It is necessary for you to be perfect in the four first rules of *Arithmetic*—more, you can never have occasion for, and the mind should not be burthen'd with needless application.—*Music* and *Drawing* are accomplishments well worth the trouble of attaining, if your inclination and genius lead to either—if not, do not attempt them;—for it will be only much time and great labor unprofitably thrown away—it being next to impossible to arrive at any degree of perfection in those arts, by the dint of perseverance only, if a good ear, and a native genius be wanting.—The study of *Natural Philosophy*, you will find both pleasing and instructive—pleasing from the continual new discoveries to be made of the innumera-
 merably

merably various beauties of nature—a most agreeable gratification of that desire of knowledge wisely implanted in the human mind—and, highly instructive, as those discoveries lead to the contemplation of the great Author of nature, whose wisdom and goodness so conspicuously shine through all His works, that it is impossible to reflect seriously on them, without admiration and gratitude.

These, my dear, are but a few of those mental improvements I would recommend to you—indeed there is no branch of knowledge that your capacity is equal to, and which you have an opportunity of acquiring, that, I think, ought to be neglected.—It has been objected against
all

all female learning, beyond that of household œconomy, that it tends only to fill the minds of the sex with a conceited vanity, which sets them above their proper business—occasions an indifference to, if not a total neglect of, their family-affairs—and serves only to render them useless wives and impertinent companions.—It must be confess'd, that some reading ladies have given but too much cause for this objection;—and, could it be prov'd to hold good throughout the sex, it would certainly be right to confine their improvements within the narrow limits of the nursery, of the kitchen, and the confectionary;—but, I believe, it will, upon examination, be found, that such ill consequences proceed chiefly

4

from

from too great an imbecillity of mind to be capable of much enlargement, or from a mere affectation of knowledge, void of all reality.—Vanity is never the result of understanding—a sensible woman will soon be convinc'd, that all the learning her utmost application can make her mistress of, will be, from the difference of education, in many points, inferior to that of a school-boy:—this reflection will keep her always humble, and will be an effectual check to that loquacity which renders some women such insupportable companions.

The management of all domestic affairs is certainly the proper business of woman—and, unfashionably rustic as
such

such an assertion may be thought, it is not beneath the dignity of any lady, however high her rank, to know how to educate her children, and to govern her servants—How to order an elegant table with œconomy, and to manage her whole family with prudence, regularity, and method;—if in these she is defective, whatever may be her attainments in any other kinds of knowledge, she will act out of character—and, by not moving in her proper sphere, she will become rather the object of ridicule than of approbation.—But, I believe, it may with truth be affirm'd, that the neglect of these domestic concerns has much more frequently proceeded from an exorbitant love of diversions, from a ridiculous fondness

fondness for dress and gallantry, or from
 a mistaken pride that has plac'd such
 duties in a servile light—from whence
 they have been consider'd as fit only for
 the employment of dependents, and below
 the attention of a fine lady—than from
 too great an attachment to mental im-
 provements ;—yet, from whatsoever
 cause such a neglect proceeds, it is
 equally unjustifiable. — If any thing
 can be urg'd in vindication of a custom—
 unknown to our ancestors, which the
 prevalence of fashion has made so gene-
 ral amongst the modern ladies—I mean,
 that of committing to the care and dis-
 cretionary power of different servants
 the sole management of their family-
 affairs—nothing certainly can be alledg'd
 in

in defence of such an ignorance, in things of this nature, as renders a lady incapable of giving proper directions on all occasions — an ignorance, which, in ever so exalted a station, will render her contemptible, even to those servants on whose understanding and fidelity she indeed becomes dependent for the regularity of her house, for the propriety, elegance, and frugality of her table— which last article is seldom regarded by such sort of people, who too frequently impose on those by whom they are thus implicitly trusted. — Make yourself, therefore, so thoroughly acquainted with the most proper method of conducting a family, and with the necessary expence which every article, in proportion to their

D

number,

number, will occasion, that you may come to a reasonable certainty of not being materially deceiv'd, without the ridiculous drudgery of following your servants continually, and meanly peeping into every obscure corner of your house ;—nor, is this at all difficult to attain, as it requires nothing more than an attentive observation.

It is of late, in most great families, become too much the custom to be long upon the books of every tradesman they employ—to assign a reason for this is foreign to my purpose ;—but, I am certain it would, in general, be better both for themselves, and for the people they deal with, never to be on them at all :
—and,

—and, what difficulty or inconvenience can arise, in a well regulated family, from commissioning the steward or housekeeper to pay for every thing at the time when it is brought in?—This obsolete practice—though in itself very laudable—is not at present, and perhaps never may be again, authoris'd by fashion;—however, let it be a rule with you to contract as few debts as possible;—most things are to be purchased, both better in their kind, and at a lower price, by paying for them at the time of purchasing;—but if, to avoid the suppos'd trouble of frequent trifling disbursements, you chuse to have the lesser articles thrown together in a bill, let a note of the quantity and price be brought with every such parcel;—file these notes,

compare them with the bill when deliver'd in, and let such bills be regularly paid every quarter ;—for it is not reasonable to expect that a tradesman should give longer credit, without making up the interest of his money by an advanc'd price on what he sells :—and, be assur'd, if you find it inconvenient to pay at the end of three months, that inconvenience must arise from living at too great an expence, and will consequently encrease in six months, and grow still greater at the end of the year.—By making short payments, you will become the sooner sensible of such a mistake, and you will find it at first more easy to retrench any supernumeraries than after having been long habituated to them.

If

If your house is superintended by an housekeeper, and your servants are accountable to her, let your housekeeper be accountable to yourself, and let her be entirely govern'd by your directions—carefully examine her bills, and suffer no extravagancies or unnecessary articles to pass unnoticed;—let these bills be brought to you every morning, what they contain will then be easily recollected without burthening your memory;—your accounts being short will be adjusted with less trouble and with more exactness.—Should you at any time have an upper servant, whose family and education were superior to that state of subjection, to which succeeding misfortunes may have reduced her, she ought

to be treated with peculiar indulgence:—
 if she has understanding enough to be
 conversable, and humility enough always
 to keep her proper distance, lessen, as
 much as possible, every painful remem-
 brance of former prospects, by looking
 on her as an humble friend, and by mak-
 ing her an occasional companion;—but
 never descend to converse with those
 whose birth, education, and early views
 in life, were not superior to a state of ser-
 vitude—their minds being in general suit-
 ed to their station, they are apt to be in-
 toxicated by any degree of familiarity, and
 to become useless and impertinent.—The
 habit, which very many ladies have con-
 tracted of talking to and consulting with
 their women, has so spoil'd that set of ser-
 vants,

vants, that few of them are to be met with, who do not commence their service, by giving their unask'd opinion of your person, dress, or management, artfully convey'd in the too generally accepted vehicle of flattery—and, if they are allowed in this, they will next proceed to offer their advice on any occasion that may happen to discompose, or ruffle your temper—check therefore the first appearance of such impertinence, by a reprimand sufficiently severe to prevent a repetition of it.

Give your orders in a plain distinct manner, with good-nature, join'd to a steadiness that will shew they must be punctually obey'd ;—treat all your do-

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mestics with such mildness and affability,
 that you may be served rather out of af-
 fection than from fear;—let them live
 happily under you;—give them leisure for
 their own business, time for innocent re-
 creation, and more especially for attending
 the public service of the church, to be in-
 structed in their duty to GOD—without
 which, you have no right to expect the
 discharge of that owing to yourself.—
 When wrong, tell them calmly of their
 faults;—if they amend not after two or
 three such rebukes, dismiss them—but
 never descend to passion and scolding,
 which are inconsistent with a good under-
 standing, and beneath the dignity of a
 gentlewoman.—Be very exact in your
 hours, without which there can be no
 order

order in your family, I mean those of rising, eating, &c.—Require from your servants punctuality in these, and never be yourself the cause of breaking through the rules you have laid down, by deferring breakfast, putting back the dinner, or by letting it grow cold on the table, to wait your dressing—a custom from which many ladies introduce confusion, and bring their orders into neglect—Be always dress'd, at least, half an hour before dinner.—Having mention'd this important article, I must be allow'd a little digression on the subject.

Whatever time is taken up in dress, beyond what is necessary to decency and cleanliness, may be look'd upon—to say

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no worfe—as a vacuum in life:—By decency, I mean such a habit as is suitable to your rank and fortune—an ill-placed finery, inconsistent with either, is not ornamental, but ridiculous:—A compliance with fashion, so far as to avoid the affectation of singularity, is necessary—but to run into the extreme of fashions, more especially those which are inconvenient, is the certain proof of a weak mind:—have a better opinion of yourself than to suppose you can receive any additional merit from the adventitious ornaments of dress;—leave the study of the toilet to those who are adapted to it—I mean that insignificant set of females, whose whole life, from the cradle to the coffin, is only a varied scene of

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trifling,

trifling, and whose intellectuals fit them not for any thing beyond it :—such as these may be allowed to pass whole mornings at their looking-glasses, in the important business of suiting a set of ribbons, adjusting a few curls, or determining the position of a patch—one, perhaps, of their most innocent ways of idling—but, let as small a portion of your time as possible be taken up in dressing—be always perfectly clean and neat, both in your person and clothes—equally so when alone, as in company ;—look upon all beyond this, as immaterial in itself, any farther than as the different ranks of mankind have made some distinction in habit, generally esteem'd necessary ;—and, remember, that it is never the dress, however

ever

ever sumptuous, which reflects dignity and honour on the person—it is the rank and merit of the person that gives consequence to the dress.—But to return—

It is your own steadiness and example of regularity that alone can preserve uninterrupted order in your family;—if, by forgetfulness or inattention, you at any time suffer your commands to be disobey'd with impunity, your servants will grow upon such neglect into a habit of carelessness, until repeated faults—of which this is properly the source—rouse you into anger, which an even hand would never have made necessary.—Be not whimsical or capricious in your likings—approve with judgment, and condemn

condemn with reason, that acting right may be as certainly the means of obtaining your favor as the contrary of incurring your displeasure,

From what has been said, you will see, that, in order to the proper discharge of your domestic duties, it is absolutely necessary for you to have a perfect knowledge of every branch of household œconomy, without which you can neither correct what is wrong, approve what is right, nor give directions with propriety:—it is the want of this knowledge that reduces many a fine lady's family to a state of the utmost confusion and disorder, on the sudden removal of a managing servant, until the place is supplied by
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a successor of equal ability.—How much out of character, how ridiculous must a mistress of a family appear, who is entirely incapable of giving practical orders on such an occasion—let that never be *your* case!—Remember, my dear, this is the only proper temporal business assign'd you by Providence, and in a thing so indispensably needful, so easily attain'd—where so little study or application is necessary to arrive at the most commendable degree of it—the want even of perfection is almost inexcusable;—make yourself mistress of the theory, that you may be able, the more readily to reduce it into practice:—when you have a family to command, let the care of it always employ your principal attention, and

and let every part of it be subjected to your own inspection.—If you rise early—a custom, I hope, you have not left off since you was with me—if you waste no unnecessary time in dressing, and if you conduct your house in a regular method—you will find many vacant hours unfilled by this material business, and no objection can be made to your employing those in such improvements of the mind as are most suitable to your genius and inclination.—I believe no man of understanding will think that, under such regulations, a woman will either make a less agreeable companion, a less useful wife, a less careful mother, or a worse mistress
of

of a family, for all the additional knowledge her industry and application can acquire.

The morning being always thus advantageously engag'd, the latter part of the day, as I before said, may be given to relaxation and amusement—some of these hours may be very agreeably, and usefully employed by entertaining books—a few of which, in the English language, I will mention to you, as a specimen of the kind I would recommend to your perusal, and I shall include some others religious and instructive.—

Mason

Mason on Self Knowledge
Oeconomy of Human Life
Seneca's Morals
Epicletus
Cicero's Offices
Collier's Antoninus
Hoadly's
Seed's
Sherlock's
Sterne's
Fordyce's
Rollin's Belles Lettres
Nature Display'd
The Spectator
The Guardian
The Female Spectator
The Rambler
The Adventurer
The World
Cicero's Familiar Letters
Pliny's Letters
Fitzosborne's Letters
Epistles for the Ladies
Freeman's Letters
Telemachus

The Vicar of Wakefield
Salmon's Geographical Grammar
Potter's Antiquities of Greece
Rollin's Antient History
Kennet's Antiquities of Rome
Hooke's Roman History
Hume's History of England
Robertson's History of Scotland
Milton's Poetical Works
Pope's Ethic Epistles
— Homer
Thomson's Works
Young's Works
Mrs. Rowe's Works
Langborne's Works
Moore's Fables for the Female Sex
Tales of the Genii
Visions
Dodsley's Collection of Poems

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From

From these you may form a judgment of that sort of reading, which will be both useful and entertaining to you.—I have nam'd only those *Practical Sermons*, which, I thought, would more directly influence your conduct in life—*Our rule of faith* should be taken from the scripture alone, which we must understand for ourselves ;—therefore, the controverted opinions of others serve in general rather to puzzle than to improve the mind.

Novels and Romances, very few of them are worth the trouble of reading ;—some of them perhaps do contain a few good morals, but they are not worth the finding where so much rubbish is intermix'd—Their moral parts indeed are
like

like small diamonds amongst mountains of dirt and trash, which, after you have found them, are too inconsiderable to answer the pains of coming at; yet, ridiculous as these fictitious tales generally are, they are so artfully managed as to excite an idle curiosity to see the conclusion, by which means the reader is drawn on, through a tiresome length of foolish adventures, from which either knowledge, pleasure, or profit, seldom can accrue, to the common catastrophe of a wedding.—The most I have met with of these writings, to say no worse, it is little better than the loss of time to peruse—but some of them have more pernicious consequences;—by drawing characters that never exist in life, by re-

presenting persons and things in a false and extravagant light, and by a series of improbable causes bringing on impossible events, they are apt to give a romantic turn to the mind, which is often productive of great errors in judgment, and of fatal mistakes in conduct—of this I have seen frequent instances, and therefore advise you scarce ever to meddle with any of them.

In justice however to a late ingenious author, this letter must not be reprinted, without my acknowledging that, since the last edition was publish'd, I have accidentally met with one exception to my general rule, namely, *The Vicar of Wakefield*—That novel is equally entertaining

taining and instructive, without being liable to any of the objections that occasioned the above restriction.—This possibly may not be the only unexceptionable piece of the kind, but, as I have not met with any other, amongst a number I have perus'd, a single instance does not alter my opinion of the sort of writing—and, I still think, the chance is perhaps a thousand to one against the probability of obtaining the smallest degree of advantage from the reading any of them, as well as that, very few are to be found, from which much injury may not be receiv'd.

WORKS OF THE NEEDLE that employ
the fancy may, if they suit your incli-
nation,

nation, be sometimes a pretty amusement ;—but, let this employment never extend to large pieces, beyond what can be accomplish'd by yourself without assistance.—There is not a greater extravagance, under the specious name of good housewifery, than the furnishing of houses in this manner—whole apartments have been seen thus ornamented by the suppos'd work of a lady, who, perhaps, never shaded two leaves in the artificial forest, but has paid four times it's value to the several people employed in bringing it to perfection :—The expence of these tedious pieces of work, I speak of experimentally—having, many years past, undertaken one of them which, when finish'd, was not worth fifteen

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teen pounds—and, by a computation since made, it did not cost less than fifty, in the hire and maintenance of the people employed in it:—this indeed was at the age of seventeen—when the thoughtless inexperience of youth could alone excuse such a piece of folly.—*Embroideries in gold, silver, or shades of silk*, come within a narrower compass;—works of that kind, which may, without calling in expensive assistance, or tiring the fancy, be finished in a summer, will be a well-chosen change of amusement, and may—as there are three of you—be made much more agreeable by one alternately reading aloud, while the other two are thus employed.—All kinds of what is called *plain work*—tho' no very polite accomplishment—you must be so

well vers'd in, as to be able, to cut out, make, or mend, your own linen:—some fathers, and some husbands, chuse to have their daughters, and their wives thus attired in the labor of their own hands—and, from a mistaken notion, believe this to be the great criterion of frugal œconomy;—where that happens to be the inclination, or opinion of either, it ought always to be readily complied with:—but, exclusive of such a motive, I see no other that makes the practical part necessary to any lady—excepting, indeed, where there is such a narrowness of fortune as admits not conveniently the keeping a servant, to whom such exercises of the needle much more properly appertain.

THE THEATRE, which, by the indefatigable labor of the inimitable Mr. Garrick, has been brought to very great perfection, will afford you an equally rational and improving entertainment:—Your judgment will not now be call'd in question, your understanding affronted, nor will your modesty be offended by the indecent ribaldry of those authors, who, to their defect in wit, have added the want of good sense and of good manners:—Faults of this kind—that, from a blameable compliance with a corrupted taste, have sometimes crept into the works of good writers—are, by his prudent direction, generally rectified or omitted on the stage;—you may now see many of the best plays performed in the
best

best manner:—do not, however, go to any that you have not before heard the character of—be present only at those, which are approved by persons of understanding and virtue, as calculated to answer the proper ends of the theatre, namely, that of conveying instruction in the most pleasing method:—Attend to the sentiment, apply the moral, and then you cannot, I think, pass an evening in a more useful, or in a more entertaining diversion.

DANCING may also take it's turn as a healthful exercise, and as it is generally suitable to the taste and gaiety of young minds.

PART of the hours appropriated to relaxation must of necessity be less agreeably taken up in the paying and receiving visits of mere ceremony and civility—a tribute, by custom authoris'd, by good manners enjoin'd:—in *these*, when the conversation is only insignificant, join in it with an apparent satisfaction;—talk of the elegance of a birth-day suit, the pattern of a lace, the judicious assortment of jewels, the cut of a ruffle, or the set of a sleeve, with an unaffected ease—not according to the rank they hold in your estimation, but proportion'd to the consequence they may be of in the opinion of those you are conversing with.—The great art of pleasing is to appear pleas'd with others;—suffer not then an
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ill-bred absence of thought, or a contemptuous sneer, ever to betray a conscious superiority of understanding—always productive of ill-nature and dislike;—suit yourself to the capacity and to the taste of your company, when that taste is confin'd to harmless trifles—but, where it is so far depriv'd as to delight in cruel sarcasms on the absent, to be pleas'd with discovering the blemishes in a good character, or in repeating the greater faults of a bad one, religion and humanity in that case forbid the least degree of assent;—if you have not any knowledge of the persons thus unhappily sacrificed to envy or to malice, and consequently are ignorant as to the truth or falshood of such aspersions, always suspect them to be ill-grounded,

grounded, or, at least, greatly exaggerated ;—shew your disapprobation by a silent gravity, and by taking the first opportunity to change the subject—but, where any acquaintance with the character in question gives room for defending it, let not an ill-tim'd complaisance prevail over justice—vindicate injur'd innocence with all the freedom and warmth of an unrestrain'd benevolence—and, where the faults of the guilty will admit of palliation, urge all that truth can allow, in mitigation of error :
 —From this method—besides the pleasure arising from the consciousness of a strict conformity to the great rule of *doing as you would be done by*—you will also reap to yourself the benefit of being
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less frequently pester'd with themes ever painful to a humane disposition.—If, unfortunately, you have some acquaintance, whose malevolence of heart, no sentiment of virtue, no check of good manners, can restrain from these malicious sallies of ill-nature—to them let your visits be made as seldom, and as short, as decency will permit—there being neither benefit nor satisfaction to be found in such company, amongst whom only cards may be introduced with any advantage:—on this account, it will be proper for you to know how to play at the games most in use, because it is an argument of great folly to engage in any thing without doing it well—but, this is a diversion, which I hope you will have no fondness for

for—as it is in itself, to say no worse,
a very insignificant amusement.

With Persons, for whom you can have
no esteem, good-breeding may oblige
you to keep up an intercourse of cere-
monious visits—but politeness enjoins
not the length or frequency of them;—
here inclination may be follow'd with-
out a breach of civility:—there is no
tax upon intimacy, but from choice—
that choice should ever be founded
on merit, the certainty whereof you
cannot be too careful in previously
examining—and great caution is necessary
not to be deceiv'd by specious appear-
ances;—a plausible behaviour, often,
upon a superficial knowledge, creates a
prepossession

prepossession in favor of Particulars, who, upon a nearer view, may be found to have no claim to esteem;—the forming a precipitant judgment sometimes leads into an unwary intimacy, which it may prove absolutely necessary to break off, and yet that breach may be attended with innumerable inconveniences—nay, perhaps, with very material and lasting ill consequences:—Prudence, therefore, here enjoins the greatest circumspection.—Few people are capable of friendship, and still fewer have all the qualifications one would chuse in a friend;—the fundamental point is a virtuous disposition—but, to that should be added, a good understanding, solid judgment, sweetness of temper, steadiness of mind, freedom

freedom of behaviour, and sincerity of heart ;—seldom as these are to be found united, never make a bosom friend of any one greatly deficient in either.—Be slow in contracting friendship, and invariably constant in maintaining it :—Expect not many friends, but think yourself happy, if, through life, you meet with one or two who deserve that name and have all the requisites for the valuable relation :—This may justly be deem'd the highest blessing of mortality ; —uninterrupted health has the general voice—but, in my opinion, such an intercourse of friendship as much deserves the preference, as the mental pleasures, both in nature and degree, exceed the corporeal :—The weaknesses,

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the pains of the body may be inexpressibly alleviated by the conversation of a person, by affection endear'd, by reason approv'd—whose tender sympathy partakes your afflictions and shares your enjoyments—who is steady in the correction but mild in the reproof of your faults—like a guardian angel, ever watchful to warn you of unforeseen danger, and, by timely admonitions, to prevent the mistakes incident to human frailty and to self-partiality :—This is the true office of friendship :—With such a friend, no state of life can be absolutely unhappy ;—but, destitute of some such connection, Heaven has so form'd our natures for this intimate society, that, amidst the affluence of fortune,

fortune, and in the flow of uninterrupted health, there will be an aching void in the solitary breast, which can never otherwise know a plenitude of happiness.

—Should the Supreme Disposer of all events bestow on you this superlative gift—to such a friend, let your heart be ever unreservedly open;—conceal no secret thought—disguise no latent weakness—but bare your bosom to the faithful probe of honest friendship, and, shrink not, if it smarts beneath the touch;—nor, with tenacious pride dislike the person that freely dares to condemn some favourite foible—but, ever open to conviction, hear with attention, and receive with gratitude, the kind reproof that flows from tenderness:—When sen-

fible of a fault, be ingenuous in the confession — be sincere and steady in the correction of it.

Happy is her lot, who, in a husband, finds this invaluable friend!—Yet, so great is the hazard, so disproportioned the chances, that I could almost wish the dangerous die was never to be thrown for any of you!—But, as probably it may, let me conjure ye all, my dear girls, if ever any of you take this most important step in life, to proceed with the utmost care and with deliberate circumspection. —Fortune and Family it is the sole province of your father to direct in—he certainly has always an undoubted right to a negative voice, though not to a compulsive

pulsive one :—as, a child is very justifiable in the refusal of her hand, even to the absolute command of a father, where her heart cannot go with it — so is she extremely culpable, in giving it contrary to his approbation :—Here, I must take shame to myself !—And, for this unpardonable fault, I do justly acknowledge that the subsequent ill consequences of a most unhappy marriage were the proper punishment :— This, and every other error in my own conduct, I do, and shall, with the utmost candor, lay open to you, sincerely praying that you may reap the benefit of my experience, and that you may avoid those rocks, on which, either by carelessness, or sometimes,

alas, by too much caution, I have been wreck'd !—But to return.—

The chief point to be regarded, in the choice of *a companion for life*, is a really virtuous principle—an unaffected goodness of heart ; — without this, you will be continually shock'd by indecency, and pain'd by impiety. — So numerous have been the unhappy victims to the ridiculous opinion — *A reform'd libertine makes the best husband* — that, did not experience daily evince the contrary, one would believe it impossible for a girl, who has a tolerable degree of common understanding, to be made the dupe of so erroneous a position, which has not the least shadow of reason for it's foundation,

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dation, and which a small share of observation will prove to be false in fact.— A man, who has been long conversant with the worst sort of women, is very apt to contract a bad opinion of and a contempt for the sex in general ;—incapable of esteeming any, he is suspicious of all ;—jealous without cause, angry without provocation — and his own disturb'd imagination is a continual source of ill humour : — to this is frequently join'd a bad habit of body, the natural consequence of an irregular life, which gives an additional sourness to the temper :—What rational prospect of happiness can there be with such a companion ? — And, that this is the general character of those who are called reformed

rakes, observation will certify ;—but, admit there may be some exceptions, it is a hazard upon which no considerate woman would venture the peace of her whole future life.—The vanity of those girls, who believe themselves capable of working miracles of this kind, and who give up their persons to men of libertine principles, upon the wild expectation of reclaiming them, justly deserves the disappointment, which it will generally meet with ;—for, believe me, a wife is, of all persons, the least likely to succeed in such an attempt.—Be it your care to find that virtue in a lover which you must never hope to form in a husband.—Good Sense and Good Nature are almost equally requisite ; — if the former is wanting,

wanting, it will be next to impossible for you to esteem the person of whose behaviour you may have cause to be ashamed—and mutual esteem is as necessary to happiness in the married state as mutual affection ;—without the latter every day will bring with it some fresh cause of vexation—until repeated quarrels produce a coldness, which will settle into an irreconcilable aversion, and you will become, not only each other's torment, but the object of contempt to your family and to your acquaintance.

This quality of Good Nature is, of all others, the most difficult to be ascertained, on account of the general mistake of blending it with Good Humour, as if
they

they were in themselves the same—
 whereas, in fact, no two principles of
 action are more essentially different—
 and this may require some explanation.

—By Good Nature, I mean, that true
 benevolence which partakes the felicity
 of all mankind, which promotes the sa-
 tisfaction of every individual within the
 reach of its ability, which relieves the
 distressed, comforts the afflicted, diffuses
 blessings, and communicates happiness,
 far as it's sphere of action can extend—
 and which, in the private scenes of life,
 will shine conspicuous in the dutiful son,
 in the affectionate husband, the indulgent
 father, the faithful friend, and in the com-
 passionate master both to man and beast:
 —whilst Good Humour is nothing more

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than a cheerful, pleasing deportment—arising either from a natural gaiety of mind, or from an affectation of popularity—join'd to an affability of behaviour, the result of good breeding—and from a ready compliance with the taste of every company :—This kind of mere good humour is, by far, the most striking quality ;—it is frequently mistaken for and complimented with the superior name of real good nature—a man, by this specious appearance, has often acquir'd that appellation, who, in all the actions of his private life, has been a morose, cruel, revengeful, sullen, haughty tyrant—On the contrary, a man of a truly benevolent disposition, and form'd to promote

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mote the happiness of all around him,
 may sometimes, perhaps, from an ill habit
 of body, an accidental vexation, or from a
 commendable openness of heart, above the
 meanness of disguise, be guilty of little sal-
 lies of peevishness, or of ill humour,
 which, carrying the appearance of ill na-
 ture, may be unjustly thought to proceed
 from it, by persons who are unacquainted
 with his true character, and who take ill
 humour and ill nature to be synonymous
 terms—though in reality they bear not
 the least analogy to each other.—In
 order to the forming a right judgment,
 it is absolutely necessary to observe this
 distinction, which will effectually secure
 you from the dangerous error of taking
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the shadow for the substance — an irretrievable mistake, pregnant with innumerable consequent evils !

From what has been said, it plainly appears that the criterion of this amiable virtue is not to be taken from the general opinion — mere good humour being, to all intents and purposes, sufficient, in this particular, to establish the public voice in favour of a man utterly devoid of every humane and benevolent affection of heart. — It is only from the less conspicuous scenes of life, the more retir'd sphere of action, from the artless tenor of domestic conduct, that the real character can, with any certainty, be drawn — these undisguised proclaim the man ; —

man; — but, as they shun the glare of light — nor court the noise of popular applause — they pass unnoted, and are seldom known 'till after an intimate acquaintance: — the best method, therefore, to avoid the deception in this case, is to lay no stress on outward appearances, which are too often fallacious, but to take the rule of judging from the simple unpolished sentiments of those, whose dependent connections give them an undeniable certainty — who not only see, but who hourly feel, the good or bad effects of that disposition, to which they are subjected. — By this, I mean, that if a man is equally respected, esteem'd, and belov'd by his tenants, by his dependents and domestics — from the substantial farmer

mer to the laborious peasant, from the proud steward to the submissive wretch, who, thankful for employment, humbly obeys the menial tribe—you may justly conclude, he has that true good nature, that real benevolence, which delights in communicating felicity and enjoys the satisfaction it diffuses;—but if, by these, he is despis'd and hated, serv'd merely from a principle of fear, devoid of affection—which is very easily discoverable—whatever may be his public character, however favourable the general opinion, be assur'd, that his disposition is such as can never be productive of domestic happiness.—I have been the more particular on this head, as it is one of the most essential qualifications to be regarded,
and

and of all others the most liable to be mistaken.

Never be prevail'd with, my dear, to give your hand to a person defective in these material points:—secure of virtue, of good nature, and understanding, in a husband, you may be secure of happiness;—without the two former it is unattainable—without the latter, in a tolerable degree, it must be very imperfect.

Remember, however, that infallibility is not the property of man, or you may entail disappointment on yourself, by expecting what is never to be found;—the best men are sometimes inconsistent with themselves:—They are liable to be
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hurried, by sudden starts of passion, into expressions and actions, which their cooler reason will condemn ;—they may have some oddities of behaviour, some peculiarities of temper ;—they may be subject to accidental ill humour, or to whimsical complaints :—blemishes of this kind often shade the brightest character, but they are never destructive of mutual felicity, unless when they are made so by an improper resentment, or by an ill-judg'd opposition. — Reason can never be hear'd by passion—the offer of it tends only to enflame the more ;—when cool'd, and in his usual temper, the man of understanding, if he has been wrong, will suggest to himself all that could be urged against him ;—the

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man of good-nature will, unupbraided, own his error—immediate contradiction is, therefore, wholly unserviceable, and highly imprudent — an after repetition, equally unnecessary, and injudicious. — Any peculiarities in the temper or behaviour ought to be properly represented in the tenderest and in the most friendly manner — and, if the representation of them is made discreetly, it will generally be well taken ; — but, if they are so habitual as not easily to be altered, strike not too often upon the unharmonious string — rather let them pass as unobserved :—such a chearful compliance will better cement your union — and, they may be made easy to yourself, by reflecting on the superior good qualities, by which

which these trifling faults are so greatly over-balanced. — You must remember, my dear, these rules are laid down, on the supposition of your being united to a person who possesses the three essential qualifications for happiness before mentioned;—in this case, no farther direction is necessary but that you strictly perform the duty of a wife, namely, to love, to honor, and obey—the two first articles are a tribute so indispensably due to merit that they must be paid by inclination—and they naturally lead to the performance of the last, which will not only be an easy, but a pleasing task—since nothing can ever be enjoin'd, by such a person, that is in itself improper, and few things will, that can, with any

reason, be disagreeable to you.—Here, should this subject end, were it not more than possible for you, after all that has been urged, to be led, by some inferior motive, to the neglect of the primary caution — and that, either from an opinion too hastily entertain'd, from an unaccountable partiality, or from the powerful prevalence of persuasion, you may be unfortunately induc'd to give your hand to a man, whose bad heart and morose temper, conceal'd by a well practis'd dissimulation, may render every flattering hope of happiness abortive—May Heaven, in mercy, guard you from this fatal error!—Such a companion is the worst of all temporal ills—a deadly potion, that imbitters every social scene of life, damps every

every

every rising joy, and banishes that cheerful temper, which alone can give a true relish to the blessings of mortality——

Most sincerely do I pray that this may never be your lot!——And, I hope, your prudent circumspection will be sufficient to guard you from the danger:——

But, the bare possibility of the event makes it not unnecessary to lay down a few rules for the maintaining some degree of ease, under such a deprivation of happiness.—This is by far the most difficult part of my present undertaking—it is hard to advise here and still harder to practise the advise:—the subject also is too extensive to be minutely treated within the compass of *a letter*, which must confine me to the most material points

only;—in these, I shall give you the best directions in my power, very ardently wishing that you may never have occasion to make use of them.

The being united to a man of irreligious principles makes it impossible to discharge a great part of the proper duty of a wife;—to name but one instance, obedience will be render'd impracticable, by frequent injunctions inconsistent with and contrary to the higher obligations of morality.—This is not a supposition, but is a certainty founded upon facts, which I have too often seen and can attest.—Where this happens, the reasons for non-compliance ought to be offered in a plain, strong, good-natur'd manner — there is
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at least the chance of success from being hear'd; but should those reasons be rejected, or the hearing them be refused and silence on the subject enjoin'd—which is most probable, few people caring to hear, what they know to be right, when determined not to appear convinced by it—obey the injunction, and urge not the argument farther;—keep, however, steady to your principles, and suffer neither persuasion or threats to prevail on you to act contrary to them:—all commands repugnant to the laws of christianity, it is your indispensable duty to disobey—all requests that are inconsistent with prudence, or incompatible with the rank and character, which you ought to maintain in life, it is your interest to refuse;—a com-

pliance with the former would be criminal—a consent to the latter highly indiscreet;—and it might thereby subject you to general censure——for, a man, capable of requiring from his wife what he knows to be in itself wrong, is equally capable of throwing the whole blame of such misconduct on her, and of afterwards upbraiding her for a behaviour, to which he will, upon the same principle, disown that he has been accessory—Many similar instances have come within the compass of my own observation.—In things, of a less material nature, that are neither criminal in themselves nor pernicious in their consequences, always acquiesce, if insisted on, however disagreeable they may be to your own temper and inclination;—

tion;—such a compliance will evidently prove that your refusal, in the other cases, proceeds not from a spirit of contradiction, but merely from a just regard to that superior duty, which can never be infring'd with impunity;—passion may resent but reason must approve this conduct:—and, therefore, it is the most likely method, in time, to make a favourable impression;—but, if you should fail of such success, you will at least enjoy that satisfactory self-approbation, which is the inseparable attendant of a truly religious and rational deportment.

Should the painful task of dealing with a morose tyrannical temper be assign'd

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you, there is little more to be recommended than a patient submission to an evil which admits not of a remedy—— Ill-nature is increas'd, obstinacy confirm'd by opposition ; — the less such a temper is contradicted, the more supportable will it be to those who are under it's baneful influence.—— When all endeavours to please are ineffectual, and, when a man seems determin'd to find fault with every thing — as if his chief pleasure consisted in tormenting those about him — it requires a more than common degree of patience and resolution to forbear uttering reproaches, which such a behaviour may be justly allow'd to deserve ; — yet, it is absolutely necessary to the maintaining any tolerable

tolerable degree of ease, not only to restrain all expressions of resentment, but to withhold even those disdainful looks, which are apt to accompany a contemptuous silence—and they both equally tend only to encrease the malady.—

This infernal delight in giving pain is most unwearied in the search of matter for it's gratification, and can either find, or unaccountably can form it, in almost all the occurrences of life;—but, when suffer'd unobstructed, and unregarded to run it's malicious course, it will quickly vent it's blunted arrows, and will die of disappointment—whilst all endeavours to appease, all complaints of unkindness, will but sharpen against yourself the weapon's edge—and, by
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proving your sensibility of the wound, will give the wish'd-for satisfaction to him who inflicts it. — Prudence, in this case, directs more than ordinary circumspection, — that every part of your behaviour may be as blameless as possible, even to the abstaining from the least appearance of evil — and, after you have, to the utmost of your power, strove to merit approbation, expect not to meet with it; — by these means, you will escape the mortification of being disappointed, which, often repeated, is apt to give a gloomy sourness to the temper, incompatible with any degree of contentment: — You must, so situated, learn to be satisfied with the consciousness of acting right, according to your best abilities

lities—and, if possible, you should look with an unconcern'd indifference on the reception of every successful attempt to please.

This, it must be own'd, is a hard lesson of philosophy—it requires no less than an absolute command over the passions ;—but, let it be remember'd, that such a command will itself most amply recompense every difficulty, it will compensate every pain, which it may cost you to obtain it :——besides, it is, I believe, the only way to preserve any tranquillity of mind, under so disagreeable a connection.

As the want of understanding is by

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no art to be conceal'd, by no address to be disguis'd, it might be suppos'd impossible for a woman of sense to unite herself to a person whose defect, in this instance, must render that sort of rational society, which constitutes the chief happiness of such an union, impossible ;— yet, here, how often has the weakness of female judgment been conspicuous! —The advantages of great superiority in rank or fortune have frequently proved so irresistible a temptation, as, in opinion, to outweigh not only the folly but even the vices of it's possessor:—A grand mistake — ever tacitly acknowledged by a subsequent repentance, when the expected pleasures of affluence, equipage, and all the glittering pomp of
 useless

useless pageantry, have been experimentally found insufficient to make amends for the want of that constant satisfaction, which results from the social joy of conversing with a reasonable friend !

—But, however weak this motive must be acknowledg'd, it is more excusable than another, which, I fear, has sometimes had an equal influence on the mind — I mean, so great a love of sway, as to induce her to give the preference to a person of weak intellectuals, in hopes thereby of holding, uncontroll'd, the reins of government: —

The expectation is, in fact, ill-grounded — obstinacy and pride being generally the companions of folly, the silliest people are usually the most tenacious of
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their opinions—and, consequently, the hardest of all others to be managed ;—but—admit the contrary—the principle is in itself bad—it tends to invert the order of nature and to counteract the design of Providence.

A woman can never be seen in a more ridiculous light, than when she appears to govern her husband ;—if, unfortunately, the superiority of understanding is on her side, the apparent consciousness of that superiority betrays a weakness that renders her contemptible in the sight of every considerate person—and it may, very probably, fix in his mind a dislike never to be eradicated.—In such a case, if it should ever
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be your own, remember that some degree of dissimulation is commendable—so far as to let your husband's defect appear unobserv'd. — When he judges wrong, never flatly contradict, but lead him insensibly into another opinion, in so discreet a manner, that it may seem entirely his own — and, let the whole credit of every prudent determination rest on him, without indulging the foolish vanity of claiming any merit to yourself; — thus, a person, of but an indifferent capacity, may be so assisted as, in many instances, to shine with a borrow'd lustre, scarce distinguishable from the native, and, by degrees, he may be brought into a kind of mechanical method of acting properly, in all the com-

mon occurrences of life:—Odd as this position may seem, it is founded in fact—and, I have seen the method successfully practis'd by more than one person, where a weak mind, on the govern'd side, has been so prudently set off as to appear the sole director—like the statue of the Delphic god, which was thought to give forth it's own oracles, whilst the humble priest, who lent his voice, was by the shrine conceal'd, nor sought a higher glory than a suppos'd obedience to the power he would be thought to serve.

From hence it may be inferr'd, that, by a perfect propriety of behaviour, ease, and contentment, at least, are attainable with a companion, who has not the most
exalted

exalted understanding ; — but then, virtue and good-nature are presupposed, or there will be nothing to work upon—a vicious ill-natur'd fool being so untractable and tormenting an associate, there needs only to add jealousy to the composition, to make the curse compleat.

This passion, once suffer'd to get footing in the heart, is hardly ever to be extirpated—it is a constant source of torment to the breast that gives it reception and is an inexhaustible fund of vexation to the object of it :—With a person of this unfortunate disposition, it is prudent to avoid the least appearance of concealment—a whisper in a mix'd company, a message given in a low voice

to a servant, have, by the power of a disturb'd imagination, been magnified into a material injury—whatever has the air of secrecy raises terror in a mind naturally distrustful ;—a perfect unreserv'd openness, both in conversation and behaviour, starves the anxious expectation of discovery and may very probably lead into an habitual confidence, the only antidote against the poison of suspicion.—It is easier to prevent than to remove a receiv'd ill impression — and, consequently, it is much wiser to be sometimes deficient in little points of civility —which, however indifferent in themselves, may happen unaccountably to clash with the ease of a person, whose repose it is both your duty and interest to pro-

promote—it is much more commendable, contentedly to incur the censure of a trifling disposition, by a circumstantial unask'd relation of insignificant incidents, than to give any room for apprehending the least degree of reserve.—Such a constant method of proceeding, together with a reasonable compliance, is the most likely to cure this painful turn of mind ;—for, by with-holding every support that could give strength to it, the want of matter to feed on may probably in time cause it's extinction: — If, unhappily, it is so constitutional, so interwoven with the soul as to become, in a manner, inseparably united with it, nothing remains but to submit patiently to the Will of Heaven, under the pressure of an unalter-

able evil — to guard carefully against the natural consequence of repeated undeserved suspicions, namely, a growing indifference which too frequently terminates in aversion—and, by considering such a situation as a trial of obedience and resignation, to receive the comfort that must arise from properly exercising one of the most exalted of the christian virtues:—I cannot dismiss this subject without adding a particular caution *to yourself* concerning it.

Jealousy is, on several accounts, still more inexcusable in a woman—there is not any thing that so much exposes her to ridicule, or so much subjects her to the insult of affrontive addresses — it

is an inlet to almost every possible evil, the fatal source of innumerable indiscretions, the sure destruction of her own peace, and frequently is the bane of her husband's affection!—Give not a momentary harbour to it's shadow in your heart—fly from it, as from the face of a fiend that would lead your unwary steps into a gulf of unalterable misery.—When once embark'd in the matrimonial voyage, the fewer faults you discover in your partner, the better;—never search after what it will give you no pleasure to find—never desire to hear what you will not like to be told;—therefore avoid that tribe of impertinents, who, either from a malicious love of discord, or from the meaner, tho' less

criminal motive of ingratiating themselves, by gratifying the blameable curiosity of others, sow dissention, wherever they gain admittance—and, by telling unwelcome truths, or, more frequently, by insinuating invented falsehoods, injure innocent people, disturb domestic union, and destroy the peace of families:—Treat these emissaries of Satan with the contempt they deserve—hear not what they offer to communicate, but, give them at once to understand, that you can never look on those as your friends, who speak in a disadvantageous manner of that person, whom you would always chuse to see in the most favourable light:—If they are not effectually silenced by such rebukes, be inaccessible

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to their visits, and break off all acquaintance with such incorrigible pests of society, who will be ever upon the watch to seize an unguarded opportunity of disturbing your repose.

Should the companion of your life be guilty of some secret indiscretions, run not the hazard of being told, by these malicious meddlers, what, in fact, it is better for you never to know;—but, if some unavoidable accident betrays an imprudent correspondence, take it for a mark of esteem, that he endeavours to conceal from you what he knows you must, upon a principle of reason and religion, disapprove—and, do not, by discovering your acquaintance with it, take
off

off the restraint, which your suppos'd ignorance lays him under, and, thereby perhaps, give a latitude to undisguised irregularities. — Be assur'd, whatever accidental fallies the gaiety of inconsiderate youth may lead him into, you can never be indifferent to him, whilst he is careful to preserve your peace, by concealing what he imagines might be an infringement of it:—Rest then satisfied that time and reason will most certainly get the better of all faults, which proceed not from a bad heart—and that, by maintaining the first place in his esteem, your happiness will be built on too firm a foundation to be easily shaken.

I have been thus particu-
lar on the
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choice of a husband, and on the material parts of conduct in a married life, because thereon depends not only the temporal, but often the eternal felicity of those who enter into that state—a constant scene of disagreement, of ill-nature and quarrels, necessarily unfitting the mind for every religious and social duty, by keeping it in a disposition directly opposite to that christian piety, to that practical benevolence and rational composure, which alone can prepare it for everlasting happiness.

Instructions on this head, considering your tender age, may seem premature, and, should have been deferred, until occasion call'd for them, had our situation allow'd

allow'd me frequent opportunities of communicating my sentiments to you—but, that not being the case, I chuse in this epistle, at once, to offer you my best advice in every circumstance of great moment to your well-being, both here and hereafter, lest, at a more proper season, it may not happen to be in my power.—You may defer the particular consideration of this part, 'till the design of entering into a new scene of life may make it useful to you;—which, I hope, will not be for some years—an unhappy marriage being generally the consequence of a too early engagement, before reason has gain'd sufficient strength to form a solid judgment, on which only a proper choice can be determin'd.—Great is

the hazard of a mistake, and irretrievable the effects of it!—Many are the degrees between happiness and misery!—Absolute misery, I will venture to affirm, is to be avoided, by a proper behaviour, even under all the complicated ills of human life — but to arrive at that proper behaviour, requires the highest degree of christian philosophy;—and, who would voluntarily put themselves upon a state of trial so severe, in which not one of a thousand has been found able to come off victorious?—Between this and positive happiness, there are innumerable steps of comparative evil—each has it's separate conflict, variously difficult, differently painful, under all which a patient submission and a conscious propriety of behaviour is the only

only attainable good.—Far short indeed of possible temporal felicity is the ease arising from hence!—Rest not content with the prospect of such ease, but, fix on a more eligible point of view, by aiming at true happiness;—and, take my word, *that* can never be found in a married state, without the three essential qualifications already mentioned, Virtue, Good Nature, and Good Sense in a husband.—Remember, therefore, my dear girl, this repeated Caution, if you ever resolve on marriage—Never to give your hand to a man who wants either of them, whatever other advantages he may be possess'd of—so shall you not only escape all those vexations, which thousands of unthinking mortals hourly repent of having brought

brought upon themselves, but, most assuredly, if it is not your own fault, you will enjoy that uninterrupted domestic harmony, in the affectionate society of a virtuous companion, which constitutes the highest satisfaction of human life.—Such an union, founded on reason and religion, cemented by mutual esteem and tenderness, is a kind of faint emblem—if the comparison may be allow'd—of the promis'd reward of virtue in a future state;—and, most certainly, it is an excellent preparative for it, by preserving a perfect equanimity, by keeping a constant composure of mind, which naturally lead to the proper discharge of all the religious and social duties of life, and these form the unerring road to everlasting peace.—

peace. — The First have been already spoken to—it remains only to mention some few of the Latter.

Amongst these **ECONOMY** may, perhaps, be thought improperly plac'd—yet, many of the duties we owe to society being often rendered impracticable, by the want of it, there is not so much impropriety in ranking it under this head, as may at first be imagin'd:—For instance, a man who lives at an expence, beyond what his income will support, lays himself under a necessity of being unjust, by with-holding from his creditors what they have a right to demand from him as their due, according to all laws both human and divine—and, thereby,

thereby, he often entails ruin on an innocent family, who, but for the loss sustained by his extravagance, might have comfortably subsisted on the profits of their industry;—he likewise puts it out of his own power to give that relief to the indigent, which, by the laws of humanity, they have a right to expect—the goods of fortune being given—as a great divine excellently observes—for the use and support of others, as well as for the person on whom they are bestowed:—These are surely great breaches of that duty we owe to our fellow-creatures, and are effects very frequently and naturally produced by the want of economy.

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You will find it a very good method, so to regulate your stated expences as to bring them always one fourth part within your certain annual income;—by these means, you will avoid being at any time distress'd by unforeseen accidents, and you will have it more easily in your power materially to relieve those who deserve assistance—but the giving trifling sums, *indiscriminately*, to such as appear necessitous, is far from being commendable—it is an injury to society—it is an encouragement to idleness and helps to fill the streets with lazy beggars, who live upon misapplied bounty to the prejudice of the industrious poor—These are useful members of the common-wealth—and on them such benefactions might be

be serviceably bestowed. — Be sparing therefore in this kind of indiscriminate donations—they are too constantly an insignificant relief to the receivers—supposing them really in want — and, frequently repeated, they amount to a considerable sum in the year's account.

—The proper objects of charity are those, who, by unavoidable misfortunes, have fallen from affluent circumstances into a state of poverty and distress—those also, who, by unexpected disappointments in trade, are on the point of being reduced to an impossibility of carrying on that business, on which their present subsistence and their future prospects in life depend, from the incapacity of raising an immediate sum to surmount:

the difficulty—and those, who, by their utmost industry, can hardly support their families, above the miseries of want—or, who, by age or by illness, are rendered incapable of labour:—Appropriate a certain part of your income to the relief of these real distresses.—To the first, give as largely as your circumstances will allow; —To the second — after the example of an excellent prelate of our own church —lend, if it is in your power, a sufficient sum to prevent the threaten'd ruin, on condition of being repaid the loan, without interest, if Providence enables them, by future success, to do it with convenience. — The same method may be us'd, where indigence renders industry unavailable, by depriving it of the means

to lay in a small original stock to be improv'd—Never take a note of hand, or any acknowledgment of such loan, lest what you intended for a benefit should be afterwards made the instrument of ruin to the receiver, by a different disposition in your successor.—But, such assistance ought not to be given to any, without a thorough knowledge of their character, and from having good reason to believe them not only industrious but strictly honest—which will be a sufficient obligation on them for the repayment;—and, the sums so repaid ought to be laid by, 'till an opportunity again offers of making them, in like manner, serviceable to others.—The latter sort, who are able to work, may, by a small

addition to the profits of their own labour, be rescued from misery, and may be put into a comfortable way of subsistence.—Those who, by age or by infirmity, are rendered utterly incapable of supporting themselves, have an undoubted right—not only to the necessaries, but even to some of the conveniences of life—from all, whom Providence has plac'd in the more happy state of affluence and independence.

As your fortune and situation are yet undetermined, I have purposely laid down such rules as may be adapted to every station.—A large fortune gives greater opportunity of doing good and of communicating happiness in a more extensive degree—

degree—but a small one is no excuse for with-holding a proportionate relief from real and deserving objects of compassion : — to assist them is an indispensable duty of christianity.—The first and great commandment is, To love God with all your heart ;—the second, To love your neighbour as yourself — *Whoso seeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion, how dwelleth the love of God in him ?—Or how the love of his neighbour ?—If deficient in these primary duties, vain are the hopes of acceptance built on a partial obedience to the lesser branches of the law !—Inability is often pleaded as an excuse for the want of charity, by persons who make no scruple of daily lavishing on*

their pleasures, what, if better applied, might have made an indigent family happy through life;—these persons lose sight of real felicity, by the mistaken pursuit of its shadow:—the pleasures, which engross their attention, die in the enjoyment, are often succeeded by remorse, and always by satiety;—whereas the true joy, the sweet complacency resulting from benevolent actions, encreases by reflection and must be immortal as the soul. — So exactly, so kindly, is our duty made to coincide with our present as well as future interest, that incomparably more satisfaction will accrue to a considerate mind, from denying itself even some of the agreeables of life, in order the more effectually to relieve the

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unfortunate, than could arise from a full indulgence of every temporal gratification.

However small your income may be, remember that a part of it is due to merit in distress ; — set by an annual sum, for this purpose, even though it should oblige you to abate some unnecessary expence to raise the fund : — By this method, persons of slender fortune have been enabled to do much good and to give happiness to many. — If your stock will not admit of frequent draughts upon it, be the more circumspect with regard to the merit of those you relieve, that bounties, not in your power to repeat often, may not be misapplied : — But, if Providence,
by

by a more ample fortune, should bless you with a larger ability of being serviceable to your fellow-creatures, prove yourself worthy of the trust repos'd in you, by making a proper use of it.—

Wide as your influence can extend, turn the cry of distress and danger into the song of joy and safety—feed the hungry, clothe the naked, comfort the afflicted, give medicine to the sick, and, with either, bestow all the alleviation their unfortunate circumstances can admit of:

—Thus may you truly make a friend of the unrighteous mammon — Thus you may turn the perishable goods of fortune into everlasting blessings:—Upon earth, you will partake that happiness you impart to others, and you will lay up for yourself

yourself Treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust can corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.

A person, who has once experienc'd the advantages of a right action, will be led by the motive of present self-interest, as well as by future expectation, to the continuance of it.—There is no injunction of christianity, that, a sincere christian, by obedience, will not find is so calculated as to be directly, in some measure, it's own reward.

The forgiveness of injuries—to which is annex'd the promise of pardon for our own offences, and which is requir'd by the gospel, not only so far as to forbear

bear all kinds of retaliation, but also
 to render us equally disposed to serve,
 with our utmost power, those persons
 who have wilfully injur'd us, as if no
 such injury had been receiv'd from them
 — has by some been accounted a hard
 precept; — yet the difficulty of it arises
 merely from and is proportionable to
 the badness of the heart by which it is
 so esteem'd: — A good disposition finds
 a superlative pleasure in returning good
 for evil; — and, by an inexpressible satis-
 faction of mind, in so doing, feels the
 present reward of obedience: — whereas,
 a spirit of revenge is incompatible with
 happiness, an implacable temper being a
 constant torment to its possessor; — and,
 the man, who, returns an injury, feels
 more

more real misery from the rancour of his own heart than it is in his power to inflict upon another.

Should a friend wound you in the most tender part, by betraying a confidence repos'd, prudence forbids the exposing yourself to a second deception, by placing any future trust in such a person; — but, though here all obligations of intimacy cease, those of benevolence and humanity remain still in full force, and are equally binding, as to every act of service and assistance, even to the suffering a lesser evil yourself, in order to procure a much greater good to the person, by whom you have been thus ill-us'd : — This is in general allow'd
to

to be the duty of every individual to all, as a member of society — but, it is particularly instanc'd in the present case, to shew that not even a breach of friendship — the highest of all provocations — will cancel the duty, at all times equally and unalterably binding, the duty of promoting both the temporal and eternal happiness of all your fellow-creatures, by every method in your power.

It has been by many thought impertinent at any time to offer unask'd advice — the reason of which may be chiefly owing to its being too frequently tender'd with a supercilious air that implies a conceited consciousness of superior wisdom; — it is the manner, therefore,

therefore, more than the thing itself, that gives disgust.

If those with whom you have any degree of intimacy are guilty of what to you appears either wrong, or indiscreet, speak your opinion to them with freedom, tho' you should even lose a nominal friend by so doing:—Silence makes you, in some measure, an accessory to the fault;—but, having thus once discharg'd your duty, rest there—they are to judge for themselves; — to repeat such admonitions is both useless and impertinent—and they will then be thought to proceed rather from pride than from good-nature;—to the persons concerned only, are you to speak your disapprobation of
their

their conduct;—when they are censured by others, say all that truth or probability will permit in their justification.

It often happens, that, upon an accidental quarrel between friends, they separately appeal to a third person — in such case, alternately take the opposite side, alledging every argument in favour of the absent party and placing the mistakes of the complainer in the strongest light : — This method may probably at first displease, but, is always right, as it is the most likely to procure a reconciliation:— If that takes place, each equally oblig'd, will thankfully approve your conduct; —if not, you will have the satisfaction of, at least, endeavouring to have been
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the restorer of peace.—A contrary behaviour — which generally proceeds from the mean desire of pleasing, by flattery, at the expence of truth—often widens a trifling breach into open and irreconcilable enmity :—People of this disposition are the worst sort of incendiaries—the greatest plague of human society, because the most difficult to be guarded against, from their always wearing the specious disguise of pretended approbation and friendship to the present, and equally deceitful resentment against the absent person or company.

To enumerate all the social duties would lead me too far ;— suffice it, therefore, my dear, in few words to sum

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up what remains.—Let truth ever dwell upon your tongue.—Scorn to flatter any, and despise the person who would practise so base an art upon yourself. — Be honestly open in every part of your behaviour and conversation.—All, with whom you have any intercourse, even down to the meanest station, have a right to civility and good-humour from you : — a superiority of rank or fortune is no licence for a proud supercilious behaviour—the disadvantages of a dependent state are alone sufficient to labour under, it is both unjust and cruel to encrease them, either by a haughty deportment or by the unwarrantable exercise of a capricious temper.

Examine every part of your conduct towards others, by the unerring rule of supposing a change of places — this will certainly lead to an impartial judgment;—do then what appears to you right, or, in other words, *what you would they should do unto you*—which comprehends every duty relative to society.

Aim at perfection, or you will never reach to an attainable height of virtue. — Be religious without hypocrisy, pious without enthusiasm. — Endeavour to merit the favor of GOD, by a sincere and uniform obedience to whatever you know or believe to be his will:—And, should afflictive evils be permitted to cloud the sun-shine of your

brightest days, receive them with submission — satisfied that a Being, equally wise, omniscient, and beneficent, at once sees and intends the good of His whole creation — and that every general or particular dispensation of His providence, towards the rational part of it, is so calculated as to be productive of ultimate happiness, which nothing but the misbehaviour of individuals can prevent to themselves. — This truth is surely an unanswerable argument for absolute resignation to the Will of God — and, such a resignation, founded upon reason and choice, not enforc'd by necessity, is unalterable peace of mind, fix'd on too firm a basis to be shaken by adversity : — Pain, poverty, ingratitude, calumny,

calumny, and even the loss of those we hold most dear, may each transiently affect, but united cannot mortally wound it.—Upon this principle, you will find it possible not only to be content but cheerful under all the disagreeable circumstances, which this state of probation is liable to—and, by making a proper use of them, you may effectually remove the garb of terror from the last of all temporal evils:—learn then, with grateful pleasure, to meet approaching death as the kind remover of every painful sensation, as the friendly guide to perfect, to everlasting happiness.

Believe me, this is not mere theory—
my own experience every moment proves

the fact undeniably true—my conduct, in all those relations which still subsist with me, nearly as human imperfection will allow, is govern'd by the rules here laid down for you—and it produces the constant rational composure, which constitutes the most perfect felicity of human life ; ——— for, with truth, I can aver, that I daily feel incomparably more real satisfaction, more true contentment in my present retirement, than the gayest scenes of festive mirth ever afforded me ; ——— I am pleas'd with this life, without an anxious thought for the continuance of it, and am happy in the hope of exchanging it hereafter for a life infinitely better. — My soul, unstain'd by the crimes unjustly imputed to me, most
sincerely

sincerely forgives the malicious authors of these imputations—it anticipates the future pleasure of an open acquittal, and, in that expectation loses the pain of present undeserv'd censure:—By this is meant the instance that was made the suppos'd foundation for the last of innumerable injuries, which I have receiv'd, through him from whom I am conscious of having deserv'd the kindest treatment;—other faults, no doubt, I might have many—to him I had very few;—nay, for several years, I cannot, upon reflection, accuse myself of any thing, but of a too absolute, too undeserv'd obedience to every injunction, even where plainly contrary to the dictates of my own reason:—How wrong

such a compliance was has been clearly prov'd by many instances, in which it has been since most ungenerously and most ungratefully urg'd as a circumstantial argument against me.

It must indeed be own'd, that for the two or three last years, tir'd with a long series of repeated insults, of a nature almost beyond the power of imagination to conceive, my temper became sour'd ; — a constant fruitless endeavour to oblige was chang'd into an absolute indifference about it—and ill humour, occasion'd by frequent disappointment — a consequence I have experimentally warn'd you against — was, perhaps, sometimes too much indulg'd : — How
far

far the unequal'd provocations may be allowed as an excuse for this, Heaven only must determine, whose goodness has thought fit to release me from the painful situation — though by a method, at present, not the most eligible, as it is the cause of a separation *from my children also*, and thereby has put it out of my power to attend, in the manner I could have wish'd, to their education—a duty that, inclination would have led me with equal care and pleasure more amply to fulfil, had they continued under my direction:— But, as Providence has thought fit otherwise to determine, contented I submit to every dispensation, convinc'd that all things are ordered for the best, and that they will in the end
work

work together for good to them that fear God and who sincerely endeavour to keep his commandments. — If in these I err, I am certain it is owing to a mistake in the judgment, not to a defect of the will.

Thus have I endeavour'd, my dear girl, in some measure, to compensate both to you and to your sisters, the deprivation of a constant maternal care, by advising you, according to my best ability, in the most material parts of your conduct through life, as particularly as the compass of a letter would allow me.—May these few instructions be as serviceable to you as my wishes would make them !— And, may that Almighty Being,

Being, to whom my daily prayers ascend for your preservation, grant you His heavenly benediction — may he keep you from all moral evil, lead you into the paths of righteousness and peace ! And, may He give us all a happy meeting in that future state of unalterable felicity, which is *prepared for those, who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek after glory and immortality.*

Should any of you, when at liberty to follow your own inclinations, chuse to write to me. The address—*For me, To the care of Mr. Walter, Bookseller, Charing-Cross*—will ensure the safe conveyance of a letter to my hand.

So

So many have been the instances of falshood and deceit which I have met with, where they were least expected, they may justify a precaution against my name being hereafter made use of, without my knowledge — especially as my promise of a future letter may lay a foundation for such an attempt. — *That future letter* must contain the relation of many events, which, for the sake of the persons concerned in them, I could wish — my heart being really void of all resentment — there was no necessity of making public: — If, therefore, I can find a certain means of conveying the narrative to your brothers, sisters, and to yourself, when you are all arrived at a proper age to receive and to understand it, that

that method will be prefer'd;—if not, I must again have recourse to this channel:—But should I, before that intended period, be remov'd from this state of existence, so necessary does it appear to me to undeceive the minds of my children, and to justify to them, who are so nearly concerned, my injur'd character, *the manuscript* is deposited in the hands of a friend, on whom I can safely depend for the publication at the time prefix'd—That friend has also some original letters, together with an order of mine, which will be satisfactory vouchers of its being written *by me*—And this precaution will effectually secure you from the possibility of being impos'd on, by any pretended *Posthumous letter*

*of mine :—*The former editions of *This address* to you, my dear, have always had MY MANUAL SIGN—but, so long a time having now pass'd, since its first publication, and, the number of copies which have been dispersed, proving, in a manner, its authenticity, that trouble to me, I think, may now be dispens'd with—To prevent however the imposition of *any pretended copies of it*, my publisher, Mr. Walter, will hereafter add *His Manual Sign to every copy of this letter*, which will serve for that of

Your affectionate Mother,

S. Pennington.

J. Walter.



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